

## Henry VIII and the Protestant Reformers.

The nation was very far from being converted from the old creed by the denunciations or the exhortations of the Protestant preachers. They seem, however, to have gained a certain following in some of the towns.

The English Protestant Reformation was thus no great national movement like that which took the country by storm in Scotland, Holland, and in parts of Germany and Switzerland. It originated mainly with the enthusiastic young men of the universities who had read the works of Luther or Zwingli, and who, in their zeal for a radical renovation of the Church, outstripped the older generation of reformers represented by Colet and More. It was at best, and for a long time, a sectarian and not a national movement. The Reformation inaugurated by Henry VIII, and guided by Cranmer and Cromwell, the subservient instruments of his arbitrary will, was not Protestant in the Lutheran and Zwinglian or Calvinist sense, though policy sometimes compelled Henry to coquet with the Lutheran princes and reformers, and to attempt a compromise with the doctrinal tenets of Luther, as in the Ten Articles of 1536. He strove to establish a national Church of which he, and not the pope, was the head ; but the Defender of the Faith was by no means a follower of Luther, as the Six Articles of 1539, which he substituted for those of 1536, demonstrate. "The king/" as Hooper wrote to Bullinger, " has destroyed the pope, but not popery." Whenever the Protestants, in the intervals when Henry was courting the Lutheran theologians and their patrons, the German princes, showed a disposition to hurry the nation into a religious revolution, they were promptly pulled up by an access of persecution. His attitude towards the burning religious questions of the day was largely shaped by passion or policy. His infatuation for a young court beauty drove him to insist on the divorce from Queen Catherine, which the pope, for politic reasons, found it impossible to grant. He gratified his passion by marrying Ann Boleyn, and punished the pope's shuffling by compelling the clergy to acknowledge him supreme head of the English Church, and by cutting off his English income, and forbidding appeals to Rome by a series of parliamentary Acts. Further legislation, conferring on the Archbishop of Canterbury the power of dispensation and license, hitherto exercised by the